

deeply into the universe, explore the planets and better understand the dynamics of Earth's climate system.

And while this is a difficult period for the men and women of the NASA family, we will persevere. The support we've received from the astronauts' families, from the President, from the Vice President, and from the nation has been of tremendous strength. We will not let you down.

Throughout this period of mourning, the brave families of the Columbia crew have been rocks of courage and dignity, providing much comfort to the nation and its inspiration to us all.

Dave Brown's parents, Paul and Dorothy, along with their—his brother, Dave, are here with us today leading, I'm told, a very impressive contingent of the Brown family; as are John and Ian Clark, Laurel Clark's family; and Master Sergeant Jimmy Danielle, Mike Anderson's brother-in-law. To you and to all the families of the Columbia astronauts, we thank you for your incredible fortitude.

To honor the legacy of the Columbia astronauts, we have made a solid commitment to their families to find the cause of the accident, correct whatever problems we may find, and safely move forward with our work. Motivated by our mission goals of understanding and protecting the home planet, exploring the universe and searching for life, and inspiring the next generation of explorers, we will make good on this commitment.

The last element of our mission, to inspire the next generation of explorers is very important to NASA. It is a passion of ours. And because of the memory of the gallant 107 crew has done so much to inspire our youth, our shining hope for the future, to carry forth a torch of exploration and discovery, we are forever grateful to the Columbia astronauts.

As you might imagine, NASA has received a tremendous outpouring of condolences of the loss of the Columbia crew from people throughout the world. It struck us often of folks who pointed out the unique role that holds in many ways the astronauts have on our young and young at heart. One gracious letter came to us from Rosemary Callahan, the fifth grade teacher in Arlington, Virginia's St. Charles School. She wrote her letter after her students had thoughtfully taken time to write their own letters of condolence, and we thank them for their heartfelt gesture. In representing her students, we're honored to have Rosemary here with us today.

I'd like to read to you from her letter, which was written on Monday. "Today on the chalkboard I wrote the definition of a hero. 'A person admired for bravery, great deeds or noble qualities.' In the wake of the tragedy of Columbia and its astronauts, seven people have come to light as modern-day heroes. But they were heroes, people of great character and depth, long before Saturday. When profiled in the media, they were recognized for their spirit, for intellect, with a desire to learn and give to others, well-rounded people who could function together as a team. People who grabbed at life for the great and simple things. Indeed, they were the best."

Rosemary concluded these words by writing, "Our children continue to need heroes. Real heroes. May your beloved astronauts continue to inspire all as you move forward. Your hearts are heavy now, but in time God grant you a light heart again."

In this time of enormous sadness, these words from the Book of Revelation are most comforting: "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." The writer speaks of those who are at rest with God. These words also have significance for us who are still

here on our earthly pilgrimage. "God will wipe away the tears from our eyes."

Our hope is not ultimately a hope grounded in the progress of human achievement, as remarkable as that may be, rather it is a hope grounded in the Creator who calls Rick, Willie, Michael, Kalpana, David, Laurel, Ian and each of us by name. May he have the faith to lift our eyes towards the heavens as they did and find their God's peace.

May God bless the crew of STS-107 and may he lighten the hearts of their families and all who mourn for these valiant heroes.

RECOGNIZING BRUNO BARTOLUCCI FOR HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE WINE INDUSTRY AND THE PEOPLE OF NAPA COUNTY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bruno Bartolucci, owner of Bartolucci Vineyards in Napa Valley California, for his outstanding contributions to America's wine industry and his community.

Born in San Francisco, the son of an immigrant garbage man, Bruno Bartolucci learned early on that hard work was not something to shy away from. Mr. Bartolucci's father relocated the family to a farm in Napa Valley in the 1930's and, though he was young, Mr. Bartolucci was responsible for tending to the chickens, gathering eggs, picking fruit and doing extensive maintenance. When the Bartoluccis began growing grapes, his workload became so extensive that during harvest season he only attended high school every other day.

Mr. Speaker, nearly 70 years have passed since Bruno Bartolucci first worked his father's vineyard. Since that time, Mr. Bartolucci's tremendous work ethic and personal commitment to excellence have made Bartolucci Vineyard famous for the quality of its grapes and renowned for its Cabernet Sauvignon.

Recently, America's wine business has experienced tremendous expansion. While it is gratifying to see such a robust industry, an unintended side effect of this growth has been the detachment of vineyard owners from their fields. This, however, is not the case at Bartolucci Vineyards.

Individuals visiting Mr. Bartolucci must walk into the fields to speak with him. It is there, amidst the perfectly aligned grape rows and surrounded by workers, that he can be found working in his classic green jumpsuit which sports the wears of his trade. At age 80, he still prunes grapes, supervises picking, fixes machines and maintains the beautiful garden.

Mr. Bartolucci's dedication to work is only overshadowed by the size of his heart. When he is not at work, Mr. Bartolucci can be found doing a wide variety of community service. Whether donating to charitable organizations or cooking dinner for the Sons of Italy, Mr. Bartolucci never ceases finding ways to serve our community's needs.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Bartolucci is the standard to which all Americans should be compared. His commitment to farming and the community is rooted deeper than Napa Valley's famous vines. For these reasons and countless others, it is most appropriate that we honor Mr. Bruno Bartolucci today.

INTRODUCTION OF BELARUS DEMOCRACY ACT OF 2003

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Belarus Democracy Act of 2003, which is intended to help promote democratic development, human rights and the rule of law in the Republic of Belarus, as well as encourage the consolidation and strengthening of Belarus' sovereignty and independence. I am joined by Congressmen HOYER, HOFFEL and Congresswoman SLAUGHTER, as original cosponsors.

When measured against other European countries, the state of human rights in Belarus is abysmal—it has the worst record of any European state.

Through an illegitimate 1996 referendum, Alexander Lukashenka usurped power, while suppressing the duly-elected legislature and the judiciary. His regime has repeatedly violated basic freedoms of speech, expression, assembly, association and religion. The democratic opposition, nongovernmental organizations and independent media have all faced harassment. Just within the last few months, we have seen a number of events reflecting the negative trend line: the passage of a repressive law on religion which bans religious activity by groups not registered with the government and forbids most religious meetings on private property; the bulldozing of a newly-built church; the incarceration of leading independent journalists; and the continued harassment, as well as physical attacks on the political opposition, independent media and nongovernmental organizations—in short, anyone who, through their promotion of democracy, would stand in the way of the Belarusian dictator. Moreover, we have seen no progress on the investigation of the disappearances of political opponents—perhaps not surprisingly, as credible evidence points at the involvement of the Lukashenka regime in their murders. Furthermore, growing evidence also indicates Belarus has been supplying military training and weapons to Iraq, in violation of UN sanctions.

Despite efforts by the U.S. Government, non-governmental organizations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other European organizations, the regime of Alexander Lukashenka continues its hold onto power with impunity and to the detriment of the Belarusian people.

One of the primary purposes of this bill is to demonstrate U.S. support for those struggling to promote democracy and respect for human rights in Belarus despite the formidable pressures they face from the anti-democratic regime. The bill authorizes increases in assistance for democracy building activities such as support for non-governmental organizations, independent media including radio and television broadcasting to Belarus, and international exchanges. The bill also encourages free and fair parliamentary elections, conducted in a manner consistent with international standards—in sharp contrast to recent parliamentary and presidential elections in Belarus which flaunted democratic standards. As a result of these elections, Belarus has the distinction of lacking legitimate presidential

and parliamentary leadership, which contributes to that country's self-imposed isolation.

In addition, this bill would impose sanctions against the Lukashenka regime, and deny high-ranking officials of the regime entry into the United States. Strategic exports to the Belarusian Government would be prohibited, as well as U.S. Government financing, except for humanitarian goods and agricultural or medical products. The U.S. Executive Directors of the international financial institutions would be encouraged to vote against financial assistance to the Government of Belarus except for loans and assistance that serve humanitarian needs.

The bill would require reports from the President concerning the sale or delivery of weapons or weapons-related technologies from Belarus to rogue states.

Mr. Speaker, finally, it is my hope that this bill would help put an end to the pattern of clear, gross and uncorrected violations of OSCE commitments by the Lukashenka regime and will serve as a catalyst to facilitate Belarus' integration into democratic Europe in which democratic principles and human rights are respected and the rule of law is paramount. The Belarusian people deserve our support as they work to overcome the legacy of the past and develop a genuinely independent, democratic country based on the rule of law and democratic institutions.

TRIBUTE TO THE WEBSTER HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Webster Schroeder High School Men's Varsity Football Team for winning the Class AA New York State Football Championship and for their outstanding efforts throughout this past season.

With great patience, courage, and dedication the Webster Warriors came together this season to capture the New York State Title, 28-7 against the Shenendehowa High School Football Team. The Webster Warriors, ranked eighth in Eastern Region Football, have continued their 19 game winning streak, the third longest in the state, with a perfect 13-0 season.

Through teamwork and determination the Warriors have established themselves as fierce competitors in AA Football. The team has stayed focused on its goals and has not let anyone stand in its way towards reigning at the top of the division.

On behalf of the people of the 25th District of New York, it is my honor to congratulate the Webster Schroeder High School Football Team and their coaching staff on their Class AA State Football Championship. With these remarks, I would like to recognize the following players and staff. Andrew Fichera, Mike Smith, Justin Costanza, Mike Kaplun, Ray Jones, Joe Aquilina, Dave Serinis, RJ Kelly, Eddie Paffendorf, John Piccone, Jack Mooney, Mike Mahoney, Janney Appell, Dave Dodge, Lee Williams, Mike Stencil, Carl Garritano, Phil Galletto, Jeremy Powers, Mitch Pawluk, Mike Ruggieri, Steve Caezza, Mike Hughes, Marco Falletta, Joe Nacca, Jim Mikolajko,

Chris Joyce, Greg Pitts, Khyle Petrie, Andrew Hughes, Bryan Lehrer, Ryan Johnson, Aaron Frank, Craig Avalone, Jimmy Johnson, Brandon Mack, Rob Herman, Melood Abugasea, Mike Yokopovich, Chris Massaro, Mark Dyroff, Steve Jonas, Dave Burgess, Joe Powell, Chris McClurg, Brian Caston, Justin Schifano, Russ Corona, Steve Hollis, Jeff Bucciarelli, Evan McConnell, Chad Costanza, Brian Mack, Billy Bulmahn, Mark Chavoustie, Head Coach Anthony Bianchi, and Assistants Jim Bellucco, Dave Howlett, Chris Urban, Jim Cleveland, Jim Fichera, and Vito Torregiano.

IN HONOR OF HECTOR M. CORCHADO, RECIPIENT OF THE HISPANIC AMERICAN GOOD SCOUT AWARD

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Councilman Hector Corchado who was honored on February 7th at the Hispanic American Good Scout Award Dinner at the Robert Treat Hotel in Newark, New Jersey.

A longtime resident of Newark, Councilman Corchado has proven himself to be an effective and dedicated member of his community. Elected to the City Council in 2002, Mr. Corchado began his career in the Newark Police Department over 14 years ago, where he served as a detective and sergeant in the Community Affairs Division. A natural leader in the Police Department, he went on to become deputy mayor of Newark before serving on the City Council.

Committed to improving the lives of Newark citizens, Mr. Corchado has been extensively involved with community organizations throughout Newark: he has organized neighborhood clean-up projects, coordinated Block Associations to work with other community groups, and assisted small businesses and churches with smart-growth development. While with the Newark Police, he developed a system now used to track and identify gang activity. He also helped draft legislation to ensure fair participation of local contractors and businesses in Newark.

Councilman Corchado has participated in the Leadership Newark Program and served as a member to the Essex County Commission on Unity.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Hector Corchado for his dedicated service to his community and for his unwavering commitment to improving the lives of his fellow citizens.

THE ARTISTS' CONTRIBUTION TO AMERICAN HERITAGE ACT

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleague from Maryland, Mr. CARDIN, together with a bipartisan group of our colleagues, in introducing the "Artists' Contribution to American Heritage Act of

2003." The bill would alleviate an unfairness in the tax law as it applies to charitable donations of property by the taxpayer/creator and significantly enhance the ability of museums and public libraries to acquire important original works by artists, writers and composers, and ensure the preservation of these works for future generations. The proposed legislation is the same as we introduced in the 106th and 107th Congresses, except for advancing the effective date by a year.

Since 1969, the law has provided that the creator of the artistic property is only allowed a charitable deduction equal to the cost of materials that went into the property. For example, an established artist who donates a painting to the local museum is allowed a deduction for the cost of the canvas, brushes and paint, etc. used to produce the painting. Of course, these amounts are de minimus. There is no real tax incentive to contribute such works of art for the public to enjoy. In fact, the tax law works in the other direction. It makes more financial sense to the creator to sell his or her work. If a collector or art buff buys a painting that appreciates over time, because the artist becomes well established or was a known and collected artist when the painting was purchased, the collector is allowed a deduction for fair market value when the painting is contributed to the local museum. This is the fairness issue.

Before 1969, the artists/taxpayers received the same treatment—the deduction was based on fair market value. The law was changed, primarily because of the perception that some taxpayers were taking advantage of the law through less than accurate valuations of their charitable gifts. After the law was changed in 1969, gifts of donor generated art work (paintings, manuscripts, compositions, artistic and historically significant correspondence and papers) to qualifying charitable organizations and governmental entities dropped significantly. Creators were more likely to sell their works than to contribute them. The situation has not improved over the years.

There have been significant changes in the valuation process since 1969. All taxpayers making charitable contributions of art work (other than donor generated art work) are required to: (a) provide and/or retain relevant information as to the value of the gift, (b) provide appraisals by qualified appraisers or, in some cases, (c) subject them to review by the IRS's Art Advisory Panel, depending on the dollar amount of the contribution. These changes would apply to creator-donated property under our proposal.

In addition to the valuation safeguards already in the law, our proposal would add additional protections to prevent abuse. These include the following: (a) limiting the value of the deduction to the amount of income the creator received from similar property and/or similar activities, (b) providing that the deduction can only be claimed in the year of contribution, i.e. the carry over rules do not apply, (c) limiting the deduction to property created at least 18 months before the contribution, (d) limiting the deduction to gifts related to the purpose of the institution which receives it, and (e) excluding contributions of property (letters, memos, etc.) created by taxpayers in their role as employees or officers of an organization.

The benefit to the nation when artists are encouraged to contribute their work during their lifetime cannot be overemphasized. It allows the public, historians, scholars and others